OSEP TA&D Conceptual Framework

DEFINITIONS

CLICK ON AN ELEMENT OF THE FRAMEWORK to see the definitions here.

Knowledge Development

Statutes, Regulations, Policies

Experience & Expertise

Research

Models

Technical Assistance and Dissemination

Universal

Targeted

Intensive

Conceptual Framework

Logic Model

Formative Evaluation

Summative Evaluation
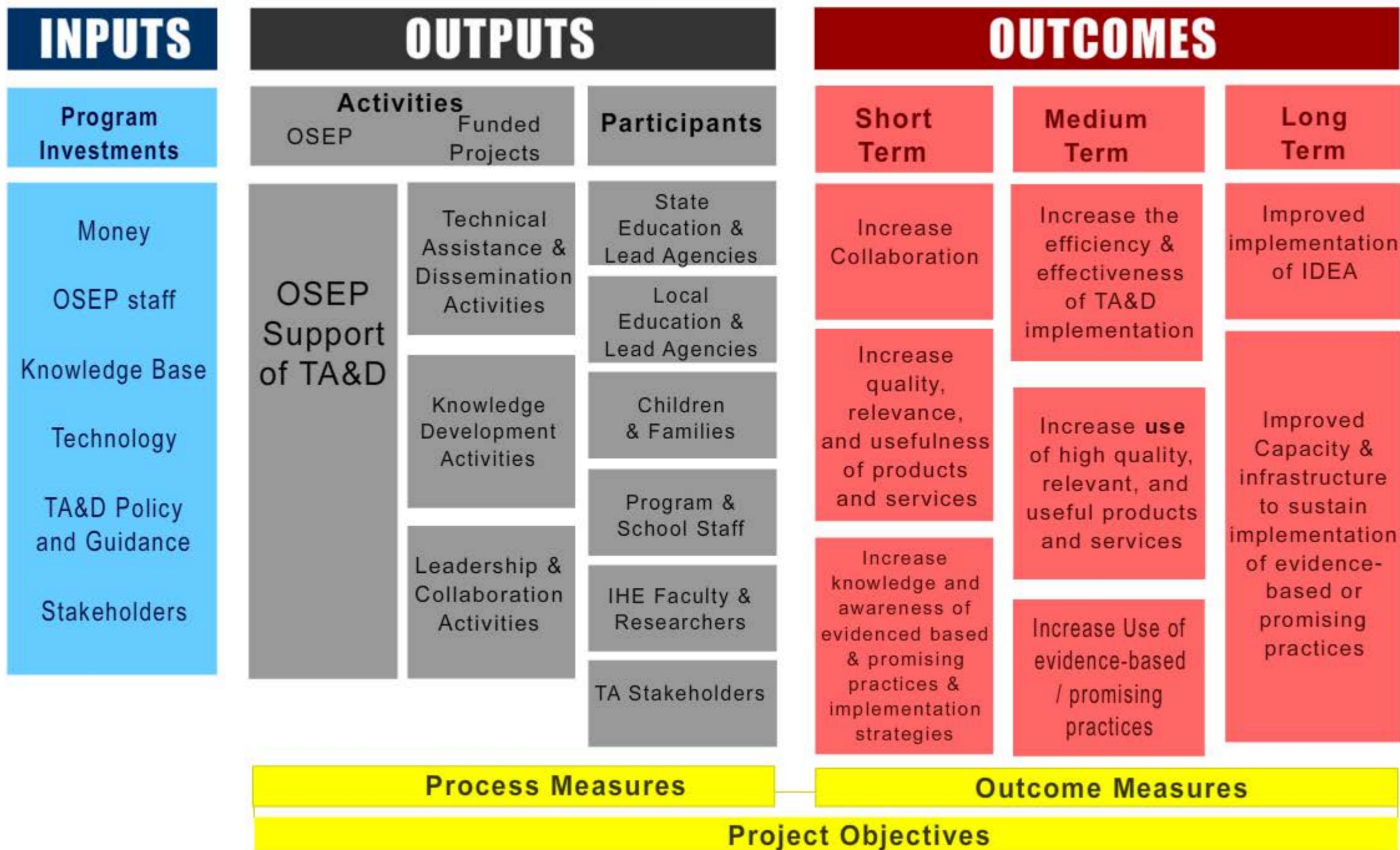
Leadership and Collaboration

Please click here to provide **FEEDBACK**

OSEP TA&D Logic Model

Goal: Improved Educational Results and Functional Outcomes for Children with Disabilities

Context - IDEA Statute, Regulations and Administration Priorities

INPUTS	OUTPUTS		OUTCOMES		
Program Investments	**Activities** — OSEP Funded Projects	**Participants**	**Short Term**	**Medium Term**	**Long Term**
Money	OSEP Support of TA&D	Technical Assistance & Dissemination Activities	State Education & Lead Agencies	Increase Collaboration	Increase the efficiency & effectiveness of TA&D implementation	Improved implementation of IDEA
OSEP staff			Local Education & Lead Agencies	Increase quality, relevance, and usefulness of products and services	Increase **use** of high quality, relevant, and useful products and services	Improved Capacity & infrastructure to sustain implementation of evidence-based or promising practices
Knowledge Base		Knowledge Development Activities	Children & Families			
Technology			Program & School Staff	Increase knowledge and awareness of evidenced based & promising practices & implementation strategies	Increase Use of evidence-based / promising practices	
TA&D Policy and Guidance		Leadership & Collaboration Activities	IHE Faculty & Researchers			
Stakeholders			TA Stakeholders			

Process Measures   **Outcome Measures**

Project Objectives

DEFINITIONS

Rationale for TA&D Program Conceptual Framework at the Project Level
OSEP has developed a project conceptual framework to articulate the underlying components that we envision for all TA&D projects. The components include knowledge development, technical assistance and dissemination, leadership and collaboration, and evaluation activities. The different components are connected and should influence one another through an iterative process. This framework has been developed for multiple purposes, including serving as a general guide for projects with the understanding that individual projects will differ given their scope of work and implementation methods.

Knowledge Base
The research, evidence, knowledge, and policies that serve as the foundation for project activities.

Statutes/Regulations/Policies

The relevant Federal and State statutes, regulations, and policies that inform the knowledge base of individual projects. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and its regulations are the primary source documents for policies that guide the work of OSEP and its funded projects. See: http://idea.ed.gov

Research
Scholarly or scientific investigation or inquiry conducted to prove a hypothesis or answer a specific question. The research base promoted by a project should be primarily comprised of interventions that have been shown to have a positive or potentially positive effect. See: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/references/iDocViewer/Doc.aspx?docId=8&tocId=1

Models
A set of evidence-based[1] practices within a defined implementation strategy that will improve child or system outcomes.   OSEP-funded technical assistance and dissemination projects designed to identify and demonstrate the effectiveness of models must 1) identify a model comprised of specific intervention practices and implementation strategies based on theory, research, or evaluation data documenting positive child or system outcomes; 2) implement the model in multiple sites and evaluate implementation by, at minimum, measuring fidelity and social validity[2], and identify core components of the model; 3)

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[1] Evidence-based, as used here, refers to findings from research that indicate either "strong" or "possible" evidence of effectiveness of a practice.   Different research techniques are capable of yielding either "strong" (e.g., well-designed randomized control trials, comparison studies using well-matched groups) or "possible" evidence of effectiveness (e.g., pre-post studies, comparison-group studies in which the intervention and comparison groups are not well-matched; and "meta-analyses" that combine the results of individual studies which do not themselves meet the threshold for "possible" evidence). (Adapted from U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 2003)

[2] Social validity, as used here, assesses whether the goals of the model, the practices that comprise the model, and the outcomes that are achieved through implementation of the model are acceptable, relevant, and useful to stakeholders (e.g., administrators, practitioners, families, and children with disabilities). (Adapted from Kazdin, 2005)

refine the model based on the results of the evaluations and then further evaluate the impact of the model on child or system outcomes; and 4) produce detailed procedures and materials to enable others to replicate the model.

Experience and Expertise
Knowledge or skills gained over time through involvement in or exposure to people, activities, or information on a given subject.

Technical Assistance Activities
Expertise provided in response to a client's defined problem or need in order to increase their capacity. OSEP has specified three categories of technical assistance—Universal, General; Targeted, Specialized and Intensive, Sustained. Each category is important and should be employed strategically to achieve the desired outcomes of the project.

Universal, General
Passive technical assistance (TA) and information provided to independent users through their own initiative resulting in minimal interaction with TA Center staff and includes one-time, invited or offered conference presentations by TA Center staff. This category of TA also includes information or products, such as newsletters, guidebooks, or research syntheses, downloaded from the TA Center's website by independent users. Brief communications by TA Center Staff with recipients, either by telephone or email are also considered Universal, General TA.

Targeted, Specialized
Technical assistance (TA) service developed based on needs common to multiple recipients and not extensively individualized. A relationship is established between the TA recipient and one or more TA Center staff. This category of TA can be one-time, labor-intensive events, such as facilitating strategic planning or hosting regional or national conferences. They can also be episodic, less labor-intensive events that extend over a period of time, such as facilitating a series of conference calls on single or multiple topics that are designed around the needs of the recipients. Facilitating communities of practice can also be considered Targeted, Specialized TA.

Intensive, Sustained
Technical assistance (TA) services are often provided on-site and require a stable, on-going relationship between the TA Center staff and the TA recipient. TA services are defined as negotiated series of activities designed to reach a valued outcome. This category of TA should result in changes to policy, program, practice, or operations that support increased recipient capacity and/or improved outcomes at one or more systems levels.

Dissemination Activities
Targeted distribution of information and resources to specific audiences with or without a direct request for this information. The intent is to collect, package and spread knowledge and the associated evidence-base in a way that can be accessed by the targeted audiences

on their own schedules and without the direct intervention of the TA provider. Dissemination activities would be described as "General, Universal" technical assistance.

Leadership
Project serves as a primary source of information and expertise at the national, State, and local level, and works to develop and advance knowledge, practices and policies that improve outcomes for children with disabilities.

Collaboration
Entities, projects, or stakeholders working together to achieve a common goal through shared resources and responsibilities.

Evaluation
Systematic inquiry that seeks to describe and explain a project's operations and outcomes. Evaluations can differ widely in design, methodology employed, as well as specific intent, but the results of project evaluation generally are used to facilitate decision-making--to better select, oversee, and improve programs. A complete evaluation of a project would include the assessment of (a) the merit of its goals; (b) the quality of its plans, (c) the extent to which those plans are being carried out, and (d) the worth or value of its outcomes.

Project Logic Model
A logic model is a picture of the goals, objectives, activities, outputs, and outcomes of a project. A logic model illustrates the sequence of activities thought to bring about change and represents how these activities are linked to the results the project is expected to achieve. Thus, a logic model communicates the underlying program theory or set of assumptions about how the project will achieve its outcomes and provides a framework for both the formative and summative evaluations of the project.

Project Conceptual Framework
A visual representation of the conceptual context(s) that support and inform the work of a system, program, or intervention, including its underlying concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs or theories, as well as the presumed relationship or linkages among these variables.

Formative and Summative Methods
      Formative evaluation is conducted throughout the implementation of a project in order to make informed improvements to activities and make sure that the original program theory or logic remains relevant, allowing for growth and responding to changing needs.

      Summative evaluation is the assessment of the effects and outcomes achieved by the end of the project and serves as a decision-making tool about project continuation or change. The purposes of summative evaluation are to judge merit and worth and the extent to which desired goals have been attained; whether measured outcomes can be

attributed to observed interventions; and the conditions under which goals were attained that affects the project's generalizability.